

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KINSHA 02743 251806Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 (ISO) W
-----260226Z 118597 /53

O 251715Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2572

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

S E C R E T KINSHASA 2743

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ELTN, BC, RH, SF, TZ, CG

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC EFFECT UPON ZAIRE OF POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF
BOTSWANA RAIL LINK WITH RHODESIA

REF: A. STATE 06535, B. 76 KINSHASA 10564 (NOTAL)

1. APPROXIMATELY HALF OF ZAIRE'S COPPER EXPORTS TRANSIT
RHODESIA FOR EXPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICAN PORTS. WE UNDERSTAND
THAT THERE ARE TWO RAIL LINES FROM RHODESIA TO SOUTH AFRICA,
ONE DIRECTLY TO SOUTH AFRICA AND ONE WHICH TRANSITS BOTSWANA.
WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT ZAIRE'S EXPORTS WHICH TRANSIT
RHODESIA DO NOT USE THE RAIL LINK VIA BOTSWANA. HOWEVER,
ZAIRE WOULD BE AFFECTED TO THE EXTENT THAT RHODESIAN EXPORTS

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WHICH NOW TRANSIT BOTSWANA WOULD BE DIVERTED TO DIRECT
RHODESIA/SOUTH AFRICA LINK AND DISPLACE ZAIRIAN EXPORTS
VIA SUCH ROUTE. OBVIOUSLY RHODESIA WILL WISH TO GIVE
PRIORITY TO ITS OWN EXPORTS DESPITE FACT THAT THEY EARN CON-
SIDERABLE REVENUE FROM ZAIRIAN TRANSIT TRADE. THUS ECONOMIC
CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF BOTSWANA RAIL LINK WITH
RHODESIA WOULD PROBABLY BE FAR GREATER FOR ZAIRE THAN FOR

BOTSWANA. ZAIRE'S COPPER EXPORTS IN 1976 WERE VALUED AT APPROXIMATELY \$655 MILLION, OR APPROXIMATELY 60 PER CENT OF TOTAL EXPORT EARNINGS.

2. THERE IS LITTLE SCOPE FOR REROUTING VIA ALTERNATE MEANS ZAIRE'S EXPORTS WHICH NOW TRANSIT RHODESIA. THE INTERNAL VOIE NATIONALE IS BEING SUTILIZED AT MAXIMUM CAPACITY. THE ONLY ALTERNATE ROUTE WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INCREASE WOULD BE TO DAR ES SALAAM BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR SUCH ARE QUITE LIMITED. WE WOULD WELCOME COMMENTS FROM EMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM.
CUTLER

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